Undigestable Milk

704. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news appearing in the Times of India dated March 25, 2000 captioned, "Not a single India.. can digest milk"; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per information furnished by Indian Council of Medical Research, some individuals especially Asians suffer from lactose deficiency, which means that they cannot tolerate lactose sugar (which is present in milk). This is a genetic error of metabolism like any other genetic disorder and occurs in isolated cases. In such specific situations physicians can identify the cases and advise to avoid the intake of milk. Otherwise, milk is a food item of choice with respect to bio-availability of important minerals like calcium, biological value and digestibility of protein.

Primary Health System in States

†705. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount earmarked to be incurred during the Ninth Five Year Plan on primary health system;

(b) whether Government have received any requests from State Governments for strengthening auxliary health system in States;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by Government in this regard?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.